



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

LETTERS FROM HON. HENRY LAURENS TO HIS
SON JOHN, 1773-1776.

[1.]

Addressed: A Monsieur
Mons^r Jean Laurens
par paris—

a
Genevó

Postmarked: Dangleterre

Westminster 8th October 1773—

My Dear Son.—

I think I have not wrote to you since the 22^d Septem— from Aston— I reached London the 26th & set our friend Manigault down at M^r Stead's in Berner's Street, where he Continues under Sentence of Death passed by the Eminent physicians Sir John Pringle Doctor Huck— Doctor—— but the Execution is suspended beyond their Limited Day—& according to my opinion might be taken off by a little prudent Conduct in the patient— He thinks he knows his own Case & as long as he is Able will do as he pleases—two Nights ago he attended a Comedy at Covent Garden carried in a Chair to & from the Coach & Box—& to Day he says I must go with him to Eat Beef Stakes in the City.—He has Notified to me his Intention of going to Spain Portugal or through France to Italy & requested me to be ready to attend him, which I shall Certainly be, but if he delays to remove longer than a very few Days his Journey will be Completed— A Man may call this Spirit ! Bravery !— but it appears so only to the Actor—& if the Truth was

known, even himself is Incommoded by many doubts.—¹ Mr Reybaz delivered me your favour of the 24th August together with the Craions & pamphlet—Mr Elmsley says that publication tho a good peice is not the performance of Voltaire.—I have lent it to Mr Manigault, from him it shall go to Mr Oswald who is in Scotland.

Young Reybaz is very Sick, His Brother has gone a Step further than I should have had Resolution to take in a Similar Case, He claims my protection & expects an advance of Money—and in his Letters has fixed certain marks of Indiscretion upon the Young Man, which surely cannot be Intended as an Incitement to a strong Recommen-dation in America—

¹ This reference is to Peter Manigault, only son of Gabriel Manigault, one of the wealthiest merchants and planters in America in Provincial and Revolutionary days. Peter was born in 1731, and was sent to a good classical school in Charles Town until his eighteenth year. In 1750 he went to England in charge of Mr. Corbett to complete his education. He lived in Mr. Corbett's home in London and studied under his supervision for two years, during which time he had his portrait painted by Alan Ramsay, the Court painter; was introduced into fashionable society and attended some notable functions; saw something of the country life of English gentlemen, and frequented the theatres, Ranelagh, Vauxhall Gardens and the Carolina Coffee House with his South Carolina friends. In 1752 he took rooms in the Inner Temple and in two years more completed his studies and was "called to the Bar", but while engaged with his law studies, he had, nevertheless, found time to make a ten weeks trip to Paris, Brussels, Antwerp, Rotterdam, The Hague, and Amsterdam in 1753. He returned to South Carolina in December, 1754, and began the practice of law in Charles Town: was elected to the Commons House of Assembly from the parish of St. Thomas and St. Denis and was returned at each subsequent election for eighteen years. In 1765 he was elected Speaker, and was thrice reelected to that important station. In 1773 his health failed and, resigning the Speakership, he went to England. He died in London at the home of Mr. Benjamin Stead in the latter part of the same year. He had married, in 1755, Elizabeth Wragg, daughter of Joseph Wragg, merchant, of Charles Town, and left two sons and two daughters. (See *Transactions of the Huguenot Society of South Carolina*, No. 4 [1897], p 64 et seq.) Mr. Stead referred to by Mr. Laurens was Benjamin Stead, an Englishman, who had been for some years a merchant in Charles Town, but who was then a merchant and banker in London. (Ibid, pp. 72 and 80.)

please to Inform that Gentleman that I have paid great attention to his Brother—finding that he was bare of Cash I had projected employment for him during his stay in London which would have been attended with several advantages—Improvement in the English Tongue—an exemption from Expenses for his Board & Lodging & he would have been kept from the Companions & Consequences of Idleness — — As He did not come at the appointed Hour I sent to Enquire for him & received for answer that he was Ill of a Fever—& very Ill indeed he has been—I attempted to Move him nearer to me but found it impracticable— He is now a little mended, a Mr Fascio & some other of his acquaintance have requested that he may be removed to their Quarters—which I think a fortunate Circumstance because he must fare better where there are Women to take the Nursing care of him & his Country Men & acquaintance to Converse with — — I delay writing to his Brother until I see whether there will be a possibility of Embarking him on board Capt Gunn's Ship, where I had taken passage & engaged the Master's promise to befriend him—it will be lucky on another Account if he can go in that Vessel Mr D Grame & two Mr Middleton's² are to go in her, to whom by a proper deportment Young Reybaz if he goes, may recommend himself on the Voyage— — Your Mr Reybaz should have determined upon a certain Sum for his Brother's outset—it is exceedingly painful to be Creating Expences for other people who may not be pleased with one's best Endeavours. but I hope Mr De Luc will give the necessary Information to him on this Head

The Mr Fascio abovementioned has Interested himself so far in this matter as to say—He thought the Young Man's going

² "Last Thursday arrived from London, the Captains Gunn and Ball—In the former came Passengers, David Grame, Esq; Mr. Thomas Middleton, Son of the Hon. William Middleton, Mr. Thomas Middleton, Son of the Hon. Henry Middleton, Mr. Thomas Drayton, Son of the Hon. John Drayton, Mr. Robert Lindsay, and Mr. Manson, of this Province, Mr. Denham, and others—and in the latter, Doct. Johnson, and several others."—*The South-Carolina Gazette*, Monday, January 17, 1774.

to America was a wild and unsettled scheme & intimated a design to Recommend some employment to him in London to which I can have no objection— If he will go to Carolina I shall give him such Recommendatory Letters as I promised— If he stays here, it will save me a good deal of trouble—I shall write to his Brother next post—in the mean time if he perseveres in the present Resolution a provision of at least £40- Sterling (forty Guineas) should be made for paying his passage & for support between the time of his arrival in America & that on which he can reasonably hope to receive Money for his Labour as a Clerk or otherwise— I desire you will acquaint Mons^r Reybaz of all these things.— Yesterday I passed an Hour with M^r Corbett who approves very much of your Studying the Civil Law & advises a Close attention to that branch while you are abroad—but this is the place he adds where you must qualify your self for the English Bar & the Chamber—He approved also of the Books you are Reading & recommended Blackstone's Works as proper for your Study when you are ready & disposed to Enter upon them, therefore having the opportunity by De Jean I have sent them by him—the particulars are noted below—

I have added the Peerages of Great Britain & Ireland as a useful Toy in your Library— M^r Corbett will expect you to give him a very good Account of Blackstone when you arrive in London— I have in Contemplation the putting you under His Eye & protection but will not suggest it to him before your own Inclination is suggested to me—The Inclosed Certificate shews that you are Entered of the Middle Temple London—if 'tis of any Value it will be safest in your own keeping.— You will also receive by De Jean in a little Box a Gold Seal which bears your Motto, if your second thoughts disapprove of the boldness—an alteration may easily be Made—when I arrived in England the thing was done & I judged it best to send it just so.—

Your old Tutor Mons^r Hemilé spent the last Evening with

me—He goes in this Convoy of De Jean's—turns off towards Jeurdon He intimated his Intention to Correspond with you—He is a sensible Man—but excluding himself from the Company Conversation & Esteem of his old friends, by an attachment to a Trumpery Woman who Travels with him & whose quality is doubtful, is no mark of Wisdom— —A Man must be Void of penetration who does not at once discern that this Gentleman suffers punishment here, for this mean engagement in which he is so far Entangled as to render it Impossible for him to make an Honourable Retreat—Capt Gunn says he called her on the passage his Wife, the person herself told me her name was Tyrrel— There, is a Bar to Fame—to Honest Fame & peace of Mind.— the Work & Hopes of Parents—the Labour & Laudable Ambition of all the Years in Youth—tumbled down—by a Baggage of no Value—the Love & friendship of Good Men—of a whole Community—prospect of Glory & future good Days—All—All, sacrificed upon the knees of a little Freckled Faced ordinary Wench— Let other Men Comiserate his Wretchedness & take Heed.—

I see by the late Carolina Gazette—the Assembly (in which it seems I am again Chosen) is inflexible— The Lieutenant Governor³ never was so He seems leaning off from his own Side & appears to be on the Eve of a Quarrel with his Council—that will be—comme il faut.

Not a word more yet of Leigh but that he is exceedingly despised.—I wait the Event of my Letter from Brussels which if he has any sensibility remaining will make him despise himself—⁴

My Love to Harry—⁵ have I desired that he will write a

³ William Bull, second lieutenant-governor of South Carolina of that name.

⁴ This in reference to Sir Egerton Leigh, Bart., His Majesty's Attorney-General of South Carolina, Surveyor General of Land of South Carolina and President of His Majesty's Council of South Carolina, with whom Mr. Laurens was then waging a bitter controversy by means of pamphlet publications and letters to the newspapers.

⁵ Henry Laurens, Jr.

Letter to his old friend & Captain—Baker in Queen's Square
Bristol let him do so & direct to the care of Mr George A
Karr at the Carolina Coffee House—My Dear Son for the
present Adieu—

Henry Laurens.

Blackstone's Commentaries 4 Vol : 8 ^{vo} Boards.	£1- 7-
————— Law Tracts 4 ^{to} Boards - - - - -	19-
Complete Peerage of England Scotland & Ireland	
3 Vol. 12 ^{mo} Calf gilt - - - - -	10- 6
	<hr/>
	£2.16. 6

a Gold Seal Red Cornelion

Arms Crest & Motto on one side

Cypher & Crest on the other—

4. 4. -

£7. 0. 6

Send me an Account by return of post of

Harry's Arrears to Mr Cheavet

for which he may draw on me or I will

Remit him as he pleases—

My best Respects to Monsieur & Madame.—

tis now 10 oClock at Night I am just returned from

passing the afternoon with Mr Manigault he had

not strength to go to the Beef Stake & in all appearance

he can struggle very little longer—perhaps not two Days

he has discharged all the physical Tribe—& will

fight his own Battle—

Mr John Laurens—

Endorsed: 8th October 1773. Westminster

See Postscript—

[2.]

Addressed: A monsieur
Monsieur Jean Laurens
par Paris. a
Genevé

Postmarked: Dangleterre

Westminster 26th October 1773.

My Dear Son—

If I do not forget, the date of my last Letter was the 8th Inst. since which, after some anxious minutes for the seeming delay, I have had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 11th. A Letter so replete with expressions of Duty & affection could not fail of giving great pleasure to a Father - - nevertheless, I must confess that after the first Emotions were over, I felt a mixture of disappointment—this is not all that I expected from Jack—I was in hopes of receiving from him a certain proposition formed from his own Inclinations & prospects & matured by Information which he had received from his friends in Conversation—such were my reflexions & I still think you might have transmitted a plan of your own, accompanied by the same deference which you now pay to my final determination.— I should then have had the benefit of an opinion, which upon all occasions carries its weight in my Councils & which upon the present, is particularly necessary.

As I would avoid all hurry, in Conducting your affairs, I dare not put off the deliberation upon this important point even for a single Day, I must therefore make the most I can of your late indeterminate answer, which now lies before me—

The great Question is, whether you are to Travel ?

2^d When will be the proper date for Commencement ?

3^d What Sum of Money is to be appropriated for the purpose ?

In the last that of Time seems to be Included.

To the Grand Question, I answer, that I would wish you to Travel, which leads me to Consider of the proper Time—but here I find myself at a Loss, tis not easy for me to make a sudden & judicious determination; receive therefore what I shall offer, as the present suggestions of a mind devoted to your service, subject to amendments.— I look upon Traveling as an essential in a Gentleman's Education, but not of equal Importance, with an application to the business or profession, upon which he is probably to depend for bettering his fortune & the Establishment of a family, which I take for granted every good Man has, or ought to have in view.

You have Entered the Study of the Law, & you justly observe that the most essential part is yet to come—"the Study of the English Law, which will require Time and great application".—You judge extremely right in this respect, & the more so, as there are but few of your Contemporaries who seem to be of your Classical acquirements & improvement in Mathematics, you come to England, take the benefit of Residing with Gentlemen, who can make you acquainted with the Attorney's practice, direct & assist your Studies in the Common Law, while at the same time you attend all the Courts at Westminster &c & also keep your Terms regularly at the Temple, in order that you may be called to the Bar in due Course—you will have laid a Foundation upon which if need be, you may immediately build, or, which, if Convenience permits, you may have to Cement before you lay any extraordinary weight upon it—in a word you will be possessed of a Stock, which you may bring to Market when you please, & the knowledge abroad of your having such a Capital will Insure you Credit, even if you should think proper to let it remain a while unemployed; I do not say unimproved, because you may upon that Stock, if circumstances permit & Invite, Travel upon the best terms, with the least "Loss of Time or additional Expence"—then too, please God I live, I shall be better able to answer the other Question what Money is to be allowed for the purpose—

which I shall be glad to do by making the most Liberal Grant that your Estate under my direction will admit of, & it is my present wish & intention, to make it your Estate about the Time which I have in prospect, in order that you may judge of your own Abilities for Expence from the extent of your Income.

You have suggested, that deferring to Travel, until you shall have first spent some time in England, will be attended with loss of Time & additional Expence— —In answer to this Remark, we are to Consider, that before you can be called to Bar, you must keep twelve terms, four in a Year, which will require nearly three full Years.—and, that after having spent one Year or perhaps more in Travelling, besides the procrastination of Time, which may from several Events prove pernicious to your Estate & even render it impracticable for you to give the necessary attendance, it may also appear to be a kind of Condescension from which you may then be wholly averse—The Consequence is obvious—You will have no Stock, no foundation in case of need for Entering into public business—and however disinclined you may feel, you must from necessity, Commence at 21. what might then have been ended—fight up Hill to establish your Credit, or be obliged to retire to a plantation, or to an Indolent loitering & almost useless Course of Life— —You see I make no provision for the Man of pleasure. I do not take him into our Line—let his Virtue be his Reward.—

The sensible declaration which you have made respecting “your Travelling at all, or at any particular Time,” & the deficiency on your part of a more explicit plan; has Induced me to lay my sentiments so fully before you—they are my own. I have Consulted no body upon the Occasion, I know Mens opinions differ very much upon the subject of Education—If I had asked two of my friends what they thought of the matter—tis ten to one—but, that one of them had said—let him by all means come to England & finish his Studies in the Law before he thinks of Travelling—And the other—

Now he is abroad it will save Time & Expence & I would therefore advise his Travelling first, & then he will have nothing else to do but to sit down to his Studies—

The first opinion appears to me to be Clad with discretion & has probability of success attending it—the latter is specious & open to many exceptions over & above those which I have already made—

Consider what I have now offered & transmit me your further sentiments by the next Mail—I desire to have your own thoughts unbiased (unless from Conviction) by mine—

But Remember, that notwithstanding all I have said I cannot help in some measure giving into the latter opinion—If you shall have so far exhausted the funds for your Study at Genevé as to be able to leave that place with propriety the middle of March next, you may come to England by way of Italy & the South of France & arrive in London before July & for such a Journey I will allow you a sufficient sum to pay the Travelling Expences of yourself & a Companion as a Governor if you can engage a proper person for the purpose—some Men make more useful observations & gain more knowledge by a Tour of Three Months than some do in Three Years—I entertain a great opinion of your diligence & good Judgement, you will consider whether the advantage is likely to be adequate to the expence.—

Be more particular in your next Letter upon Harry's progress in Latin Grammar & Geography—order him to write me a Letter without any assistance except the Heads upon which you would have him express himself.

Mr Reybaz, unfortunate Young Man, continues very Ill, the Ship in which he was to have embarked is gone—this alone will be an unfavorable circumstance to him if he Recovers his Health—You will communicate this to his Brother & I have no other subject to write to him

Mr Manigault is amazingly mended & every body begins to hope he will do well again—Intelligence from Savanna so late as the 11th September the planters had begun their Rice

Harvest the Crops were in general good to the Southward
I have heard nothing particularly of my own. —

Mr Manning ⁶ I believe will send his Eldest Son to Geneve
by De Jean's next return—is Mons^r Cheavet's the best place
for him, or do you know a better. —

I Salute my Dear Sons with the most Cordial affec-
-tions of their friend and Father—

Henry Laurens.

Mr John Laurens. —

Endorsed : 26th October 1773.

Westminster.

[*To be continued in the next number of this Magazine.*]

⁶ William Manning, merchant, Mr. Laurens's London agent and friend, subsequently the father-in-law of John Laurens. (See Vol. II of this magazine, p. 268 et seq.)